1: Meek E, G-5 (1925-1930) 1931
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is strictly taboo. This taboo is kept up for three months, and to mark its conclusion all the lads must go to the farm of the priest and do one day's work. The priest then gives permission to the lads to speak to women, reminding them of the consequence of revealing the common secret. The women prepare a feast and pray the boys that they may once again hear them speak. It is clear that these rites symbolize a process of death and rebirth. The three months' silence is a portrayal of the early years of children who have not yet learned to speak. They are a precaution also against the revelation of the mysteries to women. Anyone subsequently blurting out the truth was taken to the *Ku* house and tried. If he was proved guilty, his father took ashes and rubbed them on the boy's head (the symbol of mourning). The boy was then impaled on a sharpened stake, all the initiates outside dancing and singing to drown the screams of the victim. The women were told that the *Ku* had swallowed the boy.

These inhuman practices cannot, of course, be carried out nowadays. The imposition of fines in lieu of capital punishment is apparently insufficient to maintain the secrecy of the rites; otherwise the above details would not have been obtained.

We have seen that the *obwai* rites are of considerable social importance, and to the uninitiated involve also the religious belief that the dead are in close association with the living. But these religious beliefs are shattered at initiation, for the boys learn for the first time that the dead do not assemble in the *obwai* house, and that the mysterious voice of the *obwai* is produced by a purely mechanical process. In spite of this, the initiates do not apparently regard the whole thing as a fraud; for a part only of the mysteries is revealed and the initiates still continue to believe that the *Agwam obwai* is in some vague way a go-between between the living and the dead. It is right, therefore, that the punishment of social offences, whether committed by the initiated or uninitiated, should be in the hands of the *Agwam obwai*.

Rain-making.—It would appear that the rain-making rites also are intimately associated with the ancestors. Each kindred has its rain-maker, and though he may perform the rites on some sacred stone or other material object and address his prayers to the Lord of Heaven (Gwaza), at the back of his mind

3: Temple G-4 (no date)1922 FF38 Katab FF38
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meat was left at the respective houses, and all the members of the society, followed by the candidates, proceeded to the dreaded kurmi. The candidates were collected in the middle of the kurmi, surrounded by the rest and, as a preliminary, savagely flogged. Not unnaturally, shrieks rent the air to which the elected all added their own voices, so that the medley of sound penetrated to the village beyond and terrified the women and children. When the tumult had died down, the candidates were made to lie down in the kurmi, still surrounded by the others. Each in turn was made to raise his head and was asked by the head of his family if he had seen the 'Dodo.' As a rule the belaboured youth was too frightened to answer. The questioner then produced the gourd, blew on it, and said, 'I, myself, am the "Dodo."' He would then hand the gourd to the youth and bid him blow it, saying, 'Now you are the "Dodo." This procedure was gone through with each candidate in turn. They were then told that the whole society was really a conspiracy to keep their women folk in subjection, that they had only been flogged to heighten the illusion, and were instructed to do the same to future candidates. Finally each candidate had to take a solemn oath under pain of death that he would never reveal the secret. The initiation was then over. 575

"The newly elected then went back to their houses to get the prepared meat, which was ostensibly for the 'Dodo,' but was in reality eaten by the men in the kurmi, who, if they could not eat it all, were obliged to leave the remainder in the kurmi, as the 'Dodo' was said to have a voracious appetite. A dance was afterwards held outside the kurmi in which both sexes took part.

"No woman dared to approach the kurmi. If she had done so, she would have been caught and killed. During the initiation ceremony it was patrolled by sentries outside.

"That the oath binding the society together is no light one is shown by the following incident:

"Some years ago a newly-elected member managed to convey some of the 'Dodo's' meat out of the kurmi, and was asked by his wife where he got it. A man overheard this conversation and got the wretched youth back into the kurmi, where he was instantly beaten to death and buried. The women were told 'Dodo' had swallowed him. The men all pretended to lament his fate, and told the women to bring plenty of water and they would give it to 'Dodo' to drink, on the chance that he would vomit the youth up again. All day the women brought water to the edge of the kurmi, where the men took it from them, and, retreating into the kurmi, simply poured it away. In the evening they told the women it was no good. 'Dodo' refused to bring the youth up! 575 688

3:Temple G-4 (no date)1922 FF38 Katab FF38
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841 ripening a fowl is sacrificed and its blood, together with the
775 leaves of the "Karran-Kwoi" and "tongwa," is put in a hole in the centre of the farm.

776 The spirits are subject to Gwaza, the supreme and beneficent
782 god who helps the living against evil ghosts. In drought the people pray to him for rain, facing first to the south, and then to the other points of the compass. The priests kill a fowl and place its blood, with a few of its feathers, on a stone two feet high in the sacred grove (at times some of its flesh is added), gia is then thrown three times on each corner of the stone and three incantations are spoken. Gwaza is believed to consume the offering and the petition is always granted.

776 When the new moon rises the people pray to Gwaza for health
821 and luck, and rejoice, but on this occasion no beer is drunk. They believe that the sun is a ball of fire, which falls into the water at night and becomes extinguished, but that it travels back to the east at night, at a higher level, and gets fresh fire from the supreme god. If a tree or house is set on fire by lightning the people must put out their old fires and kindle them afresh from this heavenly source.

761 The Kagoro believe that there is a stream dividing life from death, and that when a man falls sick his soul leaves his body and journeys to this stream, where the spirits of the dead, who are assembled on the further shore, decide whether he may cross the bridge. Sometimes the decision is so long delayed that the spirit shrinks, and when it returns to the body has lost its full command. A first husband and wife will always come to the brink of the stream to greet the other, and both parents will come to welcome an unmarried child.

774 The soul leaves the body during sleep, as is proved both by dreams and by the fact that a person suddenly awakened has not full command of his faculties, which shows that the soul has not had time to return to the body. It is possible that the wandering soul may be caught and beaten, or its bowels or liver taken to a magic cave in the grove by the souls of evil men, who devour it. These evil souls glow like fire, which light is visible to the priests alone. When summoned to the injured man the priest calls out several names and the afflicted recognises
[754] that of his tormentor, who is summoned and shut into a room
[683] where a fire is burning, on which pepper is thrown, and there he is left until he promises restitution. If he fails to keep his promise he is sold as a slave, or choked.

No inanimate object has a soul, but the souls of animals may be born into the children of their slayer—it is doubtful, however, whether they can leave the living body.

778 Women and children are not allowed near the sacred groves,
688 nor may they speak of spirits under penalty of death.